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ABSTRACT

This report compares the thoughts and opinions of 106 National Scholars recognized by the Horatio Alger Association with those of a national sample of 2,250 adolescents 14 to 18 years old. The report summarizes findings "at a glance" in 11 categories: (1) schools; (2) student environment; (3) courses important for future success; (4) attitudes; (5) opportunities; (6) effort and grades; (7) role models; (8) family relationships; (9) outside activities; (10) top career choices; and (11) the future. Survey findings are discussed under the following headings: (1) the academic environment; (2) life beyond the classroom; and (3) the future. Among the key findings, the report notes numerous significant differences between the National Scholars and the sample of nation's youth. Compared to the nation's youth, greater proportions of the National Scholars gave their schools grades of "A" or "B," reported a safe school environment, identified various courses as important for their future success, and reported that they try to take the most challenging courses. A greater proportion of scholars also believed the amount of work they do is very important to later success, believed that their hard work will be related to future opportunities, identified homework as a priority, received mostly A's on their last report card, participated in activities outside of school, identified "teacher" as a top career choice, and planned to continue their education. The report includes 29 data tables. (KB)

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PORTRAIT OF CONTRASTS

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A comparison of the Horatio Alger Scholars and the *State of Our Nation's Youth* Survey

PS 028709

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PORTRAIT OF CONTRASTS

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THE 2000 NATIONAL SCHOLARS

The Horatio Alger Association sponsors the National Scholars Program (now in its seventeenth year), which awards college scholarships to high school seniors who have demonstrated perseverance, integrity, and academic potential in the face of personal and familial hardship. The Horatio Alger National Scholars program is the only financial assistance effort that focuses specifically on recognizing those students whose academic promise and potential have been accompanied by triumph over adversity. Although many financial aid programs are directed primarily at identifying academic achievement or leadership potential, the Horatio Alger program also strives to reward students who have committed to use their education in service to their fellow men and women. This year's National Scholars represent a broad spectrum of the United States population, encompassing every state in the Union. Although their demographics are varied, they have in common academic excellence in the face of hardship and financial difficulties.

The Horatio Alger Association has awarded more than $13 million in scholarships, making the National Scholars Program one of the largest sources of privately funded college financial assistance in the United States. To date 1,128 National Scholars have benefited from the Association's awards.

THE SURVEY

Sponsored by the Horatio Alger Association, *The State of Our Nation's Youth* is a survey and analysis of the attitudes and plans of American teenagers as they head into the 2000-2001 school year. In this survey, students between the ages of 14 and 18 are given the opportunity to express their opinions on relevant family, school, and social issues.

NFO Research, the world's third largest custom research firm, conducted the study via self-administered mail questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of a four-page, legal-sized booklet mailed on April 18, 2000 to 2,250 individuals between the ages of 14 and 18. Returned surveys were accepted through May 19, 2000. There was a 59% total return rate (representing a total of 1,334 households).

The sample for the 2000 study was selected from the NFO Research Panel and balanced to 1999 Current Population Survey estimates to be nationally representative of households with a male or female head of household 18 years of age or older and the presence of an individual 14–18 years of age. To permit regional comparisons, the questionnaires were mailed to representative households within each of the nine United States Census regions. The households were selected based on household income, household size, market size, race, household designation (presence of other members in a household), as well as age and gender of the individual teen. One teen in the household, identified by age and gender on the survey document, was randomly selected to complete the survey.

Since the primary focus of the survey is to obtain national-level data, a NFO proprietary weighting procedure was used for data weighting before the data tabulations were done to ensure correct representation of Census regions within the national sample.

At the tabulation stage, 133 respondents were eliminated from the basis of the report because they were either home-schooled (41) or do not currently attend school (92). Teens were instructed in the materials they received with the questionnaire to return the survey within a given time period. Teens who did not return the questionnaire by the cutoff date were excluded from the sample.

In *Portrait of Contrasts*, the thoughts and opinions of 106 National Scholars recognized by the Horatio Alger Association this year are compared with the nation's teens on a variety of issues central to their academic and personal lives.

Because of normal sample fluctuations, not all differences between groups or time periods represent true differences in the population. Therefore, significant differences (differences that do reflect population differences) have been noted in this report between National Scholars surveyed in 2000 and the nation's youth surveyed in 2000. Differences that are significant at the .05 level are indicative of greater differences between groups than those significant at only the .10 level

This report includes trend information from the past four years. Over the years, the NFO sample and questionnaire have continued to evolve to enhance the survey and make the results more meaningful. It is important to note that the sample design changed dramatically between 1997 and 1998, and has remained consistent ever since. In addition, the survey has evolved from 1997 and 1998 to what it has been since 1999. Caution needs to be taken when comparing 1999/2000 results to earlier years, as changes in data may not reflect true differences, but rather, differences caused by a change in sample design or question wording.

AT A GLANCE:

NATIONAL SCHOLARS COMPARED WITH NATION'S YOUTH

	National Scholars	Nation's Youth
SCHOOLS		
Give their schools an "A" or "B"	**87%**	68%
Agree that courses school offers are preparing them for the future	**78%**	67%
Agree that courses their school offers are challenging	**73%**	58%
Believe that it is important to most of their teachers that they do their best	**87%**	65%
Have at least one teacher or administrator to talk with about personal problems	**86%**	60%
STUDENT ENVIRONMENT		
Always feel safe in their school	**63%**	40%
Believe teachers and administrators have taken all necessary steps to make them feel safe and secure	**71%**	43%
Feel that the behavior of other students in their school interferes with their performance	**30%**	40%
COURSES IMPORTANT FOR FUTURE SUCCESS		
Computer courses	**96%**	93%
English	**94%**	90%
Mathematics	**94%**	92%
Science	**89%**	79%
Government	**82%**	66%
History/Social Studies	**82%**	63%
Business	**81%**	82%
ATTITUDES		
Try to take the most difficult and challenging courses they can	**82%**	51%
Believe the amount of work they do is very important to later success in life	**88%**	66%
Personally important to them that they do their best in all of their classes	**93%**	72%
OPPORTUNITIES		
Believe the harder they work the more opportunities will be available to them	**92%**	73%
Believe they will have many opportunities available to them after they graduate	**95%**	76%
Believe there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes	**63%**	58%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

**Significantly different at the .10 level.*

At A Glance (continued)	National Scholars	Nation's Youth
EFFORT AND GRADES		
Received mostly A's on last report card	**51%**	24%
Homework is a priority; complete before other activities	**65%**	43%
Mean number of hours of homework per week	9.2	5.8
ROLE MODELS		
Role model is family member	**43%**	41%
FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS		
Mother is a person they can confide in about personal problems	**60%**	72%
Father is a person they can confide in about personal problems	36%	41%
OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES		
Have a group of friends they hang out with	70%	65%
Had a job in past school year	**68%**	40%
Participated in athletic teams or clubs	**57%**	46%
Participated in service groups	**49%**	23%
Participated in honor societies	**57%**	19%
TOP CAREER CHOICES		
Teacher	**17%**	7%
Engineer	9%*	5%
Business person	9%	6%
Medical doctor	8%	7%
Communications/Media	**6%**	2%
Computer hardware/software developer	3%*	10%
THE FUTURE		
Percentage planning to continue their education	**98%**	78%
Percentage planning to attend a four-year college or university	**92%**	62%
Top reason for seeking further education after high school is to get a good job	**17%**	38%
Top reason for seeking further education is to have the ability to make a difference/change things for the better	**46%**	20%
Ideal age for marriage	25.7	25.5
Number of children desired (includes those who do not want children)	2.4	2.1

*Note: **Bold red** figures figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

**Significantly different at the .10 level.*

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

THE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT-

EVALUATION OF CURRENT EXPERIENCES

Schools' Overall Performance

When asked to give their schools a grade, the National Scholars rated their schools very highly, with 87% giving an "A" or "B." More than one-third (36%) of National Scholars gave their schools an "A" with 51% giving a "B," 11% giving a "C" and 2% giving a "D." National Scholars were much more satisfied with their school's performance than the nation's youth, with only 68% giving an "A" or "B."

Courses Ratings

The majority of National Scholars agreed that courses were preparing them for the future (78%), challenging (73%), interesting (78%), exciting (69%), and offering them an opportunity for open discussion (86%). Across all categories, the nation's youth were much less likely to agree with the high quality of courses.

When asked what courses are important for their future success, both the National Scholars and the nation's youth ranked computer courses, mathematics, and English as the top courses. National Scholars rated science, government, history, and foreign languages at higher importance levels than the national sample, and vocational courses lower.

Behavior of Students

Consistent with the nation's youth, 62% of National Scholars believe no or few students cheat, while 38% believe half or most students cheat. However, compared to the nation's youth (40%), fewer National Scholars (30%) indicated the behavior of other students interfered with their school performance.

Safety and Security

National Scholars expressed a greater sense of safety and security in

school, with 63% always feeling safe compared to only 40% of the nation's youth. They were much more likely to agree that teachers and administrators have taken all the necessary steps for safety and security (71%) compared to the nation's youth (43%). Only 28% of the National Scholars believe teachers and administrators have taken some steps toward their safety and security, compared to 49% of the nation's youth.

Concern and Caring

Compared to the nation's youth, National Scholars were much more likely to indicate they felt a great deal of concern from their teachers, and that their teachers were available to them. In fact, all of the National Scholars indicated there was at least one teacher or administrator who personally cares about their success compared to 90% of the nation's youth. Nearly all National Scholars (98%) indicted there was at least one teacher or administrator they could talk to about school problems compared to 82% of the nation's youth, while 86% of National Scholars indicated there was a teacher or administrator they can talk with about personal problems, compared to only 60% of the nation's youth.

Sixty percent (60%) of the National Scholars reported they feel the amount of work required by their teachers was about right, while 34% reported it was too much. These results were consistent with the national sample. However, more National Scholars (67%) felt the amount of work required by parents was about right compared to the nation's youth (57%), while fewer National Scholars felt it was too much (12%) compared to the nation's youth (28%).

Public vs. Private

Almost three-fourths (70%) of the National Scholars indicated they believe you can receive a good education in either a public or private school. This is significantly more than the nation's youth (57%). Only 9% of the National Scholars believe you receive a better education in a public school, compared to 15% of the nation's youth.

Opportunities and Effort

Opportunities

National Scholars indicated a strong sense of opportunity based on their efforts. Nearly all of the National Scholars believe that the harder they

work, the more opportunities will be available to them (92%) and that they will have many opportunities available to them after graduation (95%). This is much higher than the 73% and 76%, respectively, reported by the nation's youth.

Effort

Compared to the nation's youth, National Scholars were more likely to report a dedicated effort toward their education. Nearly all of the National Scholars indicated they take the most difficult and challenging courses (82% vs. 51% nation's youth), the amount of work done now in school is important to success later in life (88% vs. 66% nation's youth), it is important to do my best in my classes (93% vs. 72% nation's youth), and doing homework is a priority (65% vs. 43% nation's youth).

Grades

Half of the National Scholars received mostly A's on their last report card, compared to only one-quarter (24%) of the nation's youth. On average, National Scholars spend 3.4 more hours per week doing homework than the nation's youth (9.2 hours vs. 5.8 hours).

LIFE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Participation in Cocurricular Activities

Nearly all (98%) of the National Scholars participated in some type of activity outside the classroom, significantly more than the 76% reported by the nation's youth. National Scholars indicated a higher level of participation across all types of activities except for band/orchestra, choir, and cheerleading. In fact, half or more of the National Scholars participate in athletic teams/clubs (57%), honor societies (57%) and service/volunteer groups (49%).

Jobs

More than two-thirds (68%) of the National Scholars had a job last year, working an average of 17.8 hours per week. Fewer of the nation's youth (40%) had jobs last year, working an average of 16.8 hours per week.

Social Life

Seven out of 10 (70%) National Scholars indicated they have a group of friends they hang out with, while 27% only hang out with one or two close friends, and 4% prefer to be alone. Teens from the national sample reported similar results.

Family Relationships

Just under three-fourths (73%) of the National Scholars indicated their father is a person they get along with and one-third (36%) indicated he is a person they confide in about personal problems. While the national sample and National Scholars reported similar results with regard to the relationship they have with their father, National Scholars were less likely to indicate their mother is a person they get along with (68% vs. 80% from the national sample) or confide in about personal problems (60% vs. 72% from the national sample).

Role Model

When asked which category their role model would be in, 43% of the National Scholars indicated a family member, followed by 22% in the teaching/education field and 15% friends/family friend. Compared to the nation's youth, significantly more National Scholars mentioned teaching/education while fewer mentioned sports/sports-related.

THE FUTURE

Students were asked to indicate their biggest problem or challenge, if any, during the next year. They were asked to write in their answers, and their responses were then classified into major categories: personal goals, academics, and career. More than three-fourths (79%) of the National Scholars indicated their greatest challenge would involve personal goals, while only 19% indicated it would involve academics. The nation's youth were more inclined to mention academics (39%) and less likely to mention personal goals (41%). Due to the fact that National Scholars are graduating seniors, while the nation's youth are teens aged 14–18, it is not surprising that National Scholars were more concerned about adjusting to college and financial arrangements than other teens. They were also more concerned about having more freedom/independence and time management and were less concerned about achieving/maintaining good grades and graduating.

Plans After High School

Nearly all (92%) of the National Scholars plan to attend a four-year college or university after high school, compared to only 62% of the nation's youth. National Scholars were also more inclined to join a volunteer organization (9%) compared to other teens (3%). National Scholars were much less likely to attend a training or vocational school, join the armed forces, or be undecided about their future after high school.

Further Education

Motivating Factor for Seeking Further Education

National Scholars planning to further their education were driven more by a desire to make a difference (46%) and less by a desire to get a well-paying job (17%). The nation's youth, however, were just the opposite in that they were driven more by a desire to get a well-paying job (38%) rather than making a difference (20%).

Public vs. Private

National Scholars were no different than other teens based on the type of college they would prefer to attend. One-quarter (24%) of the National Scholars would prefer to attend a public college or university, while one-third (34%) would prefer a private school, and 43% had no preference at all.

College Finances

More National Scholars (84%) have started to plan for how they will pay for a college education compared to the nation's youth (64%). Again, this difference is most likely due to the fact they are graduating seniors. Compared to the national sample, National Scholars were more inclined to use scholarships, jobs, and grants and less likely to have parents paying for their education.

Slightly more National Scholars (67%) expect the total cost of their first year of college to be more than $10,000 compared to the nation's youth (58%).

Future Career

When asked what careers they were interested in pursuing after high school graduation, an overwhelming 17% of National Scholars mentioned teaching. Other top career choices included business (9%), engineering (9%) and medical doctor (8%). Compared to other teens, National Scholars were more inclined to mention teaching, communications/media and engineering, while less inclined to mention computer software development and military service.

In general, National Scholars tend to have higher salary expectations than the nation's youth. Only 1% of the National Scholars expect to earn less than $15,000 while 7% of the national sample expects this salary. Sixteen percent (16%) of National Scholars expect to earn $15,000–$24,999, 39% expect to earn $25,000–$34,999, 30% expect to earn $35,000– $49,999, 11% expect to earn $50,000–$74,999, and 4% expect to earn $75,000 or more.

Marriage and Children

In 2000, National Scholars and the nation's youth agree that the ideal age for marriage is sometime during the age of 25. However, National Scholars would like to have more children, 2.6 compared to the national sample of 2.3.

Personal Success and American Dream

When asked to indicate how important various aspects of their lives were to their own personal success, all or nearly all of the National Scholars indicated work and career (100%), personal development and satisfaction (100%), making a contribution to society (97%), friendships (95%) and immediate family (93%). Further, 80% indicated extended family and religious/spiritual activities. Responses by the National Scholars were consistent with the nation's youth with one exception: they were more inclined to agree that making a contribution to society was important.

Nine out of 10 (90%) of the National Scholars' idea of the American Dream involves personal/familial enrichment compared to only 53% of the nation's teens. National Scholars were much more likely to mention emotional needs/desires, success/achievement, happiness/enjoyment, family, freedom/choice, and people reaching out to each other/improving quality of life than their national counterparts. In addition, compared to the nation's youth, National Scholars were more likely to

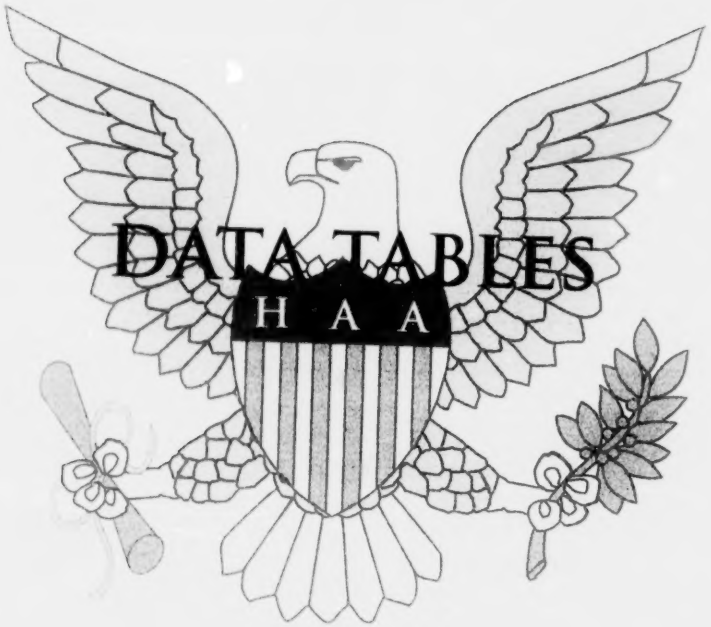
mention comments regarding universal welfare and less likely to mention possessions/career as their idea of the American Dream.

Greatest National Problems

When asked to name the greatest problem facing the United States today, half (49%) of the National Scholars mentioned the decline of family, moral, and social values compared to only 27% of the nation's youth. In the minds of National Scholars, the second greatest problem facing the nation was crime and violence, mentioned by 14% compared to 33% of the nation's youth. National Scholars were less inclined to mention drugs (5%) and AIDS (4%) compared to the national sample.

Choice for President

Since 2000 is an election year, today's teens and National Scholars were asked if they were able to vote, which candidate would receive their vote. The National Scholars responded equally for George W. Bush (45%) and Al Gore (48%). The nation's youth were more inclined to vote for George W. Bush (57%) than Al Gore (36%).


DATA TABLES
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DATA TABLES

In many cases, students were allowed to select more than one response. For tables in which more than one response was given, the proportions will not add up to 100%. In some cases, students contributed multiple responses when only one response was requested. This information was also preserved in the tables, causing proportions to total more than 100%.

Individual items may not total 100% due to rounding. Whole number percents were rounded from decimal percents using the following guidelines: Decimals greater than or equal to .5 were rounded up. Decimals less than .5 were rounded down.

HOW STUDENTS GRADE THEIR SCHOOL'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
TOTAL A OR B		82%	88%	68%	66%	66%
A	**36%**	36%	37%	17%	17%	19%
B	51%	45%	51%	51%	49%	47%
C	**11%**	16%	10%	26%	26%	27%
D	2%	2%	2%	5%	6%	5%
F	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

QUALITY OF COURSES

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Have opportunity for open discussion in my classes	**86%**	87%	80%	65%	66%	68%
Courses are definitely preparing me for the future	**78%**	73%	68%	67%	64%	69%
Courses are very interesting	**78%**	73%	63%	50%	49%	51%
Courses are very challenging	**73%**	62%	62%	58%	55%	60%
Courses are very exciting	**69%**	51%	51%	38%	35%	36%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

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RATINGS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF COURSES
(% Very, Somewhat Important)

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Computer Usage/ Programming	96%	94%	98%	93%	93%	91%
Mathematics	94%	94%	93%	92%	93%	92%
English	94%	96%	95%	90%	89%	90%
Science	89%	88%	87%	79%	79%	79%
Government	82%	84%	85%	66%	70%	65%
History/Social Studies	82%	82%	78%	63%	65%	62%
Business/Commercial	81%	82%	89%	82%	83%	78%
Foreign Languages	74%	76%	75%	58%	62%	57%
Sex Education/Health Education	67%	69%	71%	64%	70%	67%
Family Living/Home Economics	67%	63%	69%	63%	68%	65%
Religion	59%	61%	56%	53%	52%	51%
Physical Education	48%	48%	57%	49%	54%	54%
Music	45%	42%	42%	39%	38%	35%
Art	45%	34%	50%	38%	38%	34%
Vocational	42%*	41%	53%	52%	54%	53%
Drama	26%	31%	41%	24%	24%	21%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

STUDENT BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOLS

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Believe no or few students cheat	62%	53%	55%	59%	57%	54%
Believe half or most students cheat	38%	47%	45%	41%	43%	46%
Behavior of other students interferes with my school performance	**30%**	24%	26%	40%	38%	40%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

AMOUNT OF SAFETY/SECURITY IN SCHOOL

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Always feel safe in my school	**63%**	65%	57%	40%	37%	44%
Teachers and administrators have taken all necessary steps for my safety and security	**71%**	68%	55%	43%	35%	43%
Teachers and administrators have taken some steps toward my safety and security	**28%**	28%	44%	49%	55%	48%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

CONCERN AND AVAILABILITY OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
There is at least one teacher or administrator who personally cares about my success	**100%**	99%	98%	90%	90%	89%
There is at least one teacher or administrator I can talk with about my school problems	**98%**	97%	95%	82%	82%	84%
There is at least one teacher or administrator who is always available when needed	**96%**	88%	92%	75%	78%	78%
It is important to most of my teachers that I do my best	**87%**	86%	88%	65%	63%	68%
There is at least one teacher or administrator I can talk with about my personal problems	**86%**	89%	83%	60%	63%	66%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

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AMOUNT OF WORK REQUIRED BY TEACHERS AND PARENTS

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Amount of work required by teachers						
Not enough	6%	8%	8%	7%	7%	9%
About right	60%	65%	74%	53%	54%	53%
Too much	34%	27%	18%	40%	39%	38%
Amount of work required by parents						
Not enough	21%	17%	28%	16%	16%	13%
About right	**67%**	65%	65%	57%	57%	59%
Too much	**12%**	17%	7%	28%	27%	28%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

STUDENT OPINION OF PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE EDUCATION

	National Scholars		Nation's Youth	
	2000	1999	2000	1999
Receive better education in a public school	9%*	4%	15%	16%
Receive better education in a private school	21%	23%	28%	26%
Can receive good education in either type of school	**70%**	73%	57%	58%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

A SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
I will have many opportunities available to me after I graduate	**95%**	92%	87%	76%	68%	71%
The harder I work, the more opportunities will be available to me	**92%**	92%	89%	73%	73%	74%
I feel that there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes	63%	59%	64%	58%	55%	58%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

DEGREE OF EFFORT AND CHALLENGE

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
It is important to me that I do my best in all my classes	**93%**	93%	89%	72%	72%	73%
The amount of work I do in school now is important to my success later in life	**88%**	87%	86%	66%	66%	66%
I try to take the most difficult and challenging courses I can	**82%**	86%	85%	51%	48%	52%
Doing homework is a priority for me. I complete it before participating in other activities	**65%**	62%	62%	43%	38%	40%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

CHALLENGING COURSES, HOMEWORK, AND GRADES: SELF-REPORTED

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Percent taking most difficult and challenging courses	**82%**	86%	85%	51%	48%	52%
Mean number of homework hours per week	**9.2**	9.3	10.4	5.8	5.9	6.1
Percent receiving mostly A's on last report card	**51%**	60%	58%	24%	24%	25%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

PARTICIPATION IN COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

	National Scholars				Nation's Youth			
	2000	1999	1998	1997	2000	1999	1998	1997
Athletic team/clubs	**57%**	51%	55%	42%	46%	46%	51%	47%
Honor societies	**57%**	72%	66%	63%	19%	19%	21%	22%
Service/volunteer groups	**49%**	62%	45%	61%	23%	20%	23%	23%
Student council/government	**36%**	42%	35%	35%	11%	11%	11%	8%
School publications	**31%**	28%	28%	35%	10%	10%	11%	9%
Language clubs	**30%**	36%	22%	34%	9%	10%	12%	13%
Drama/theatre	**23%**	24%	15%	39%	12%	13%	12%	14%
Career-oriented clubs	**22%**	26%	17%	23%	11%	10%	12%	12%
Band/orchestra	21%	16%	19%	13%	18%	20%	17%	17%
Choir/choral groups	20%	21%	17%	21%	14%	15%	15%	17%
Science clubs	**13%**	16%	17%	22%	4%	5%	5%	6%
Debate/speech	**12%**	19%	14%	10%	5%	6%	5%	5%
Cheerleading	11%	8%	6%	7%	6%	6%	5%	3%
Participate in any activity	**98%**	98%	95%	100%	76%	77%	82%	76%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

TEENS HOLDING JOBS

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Total had job last year	**68%**	64%	66%	40%	39%	38%
Average hours worked	17.8	18.5	na	16.8	16.9	na

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Note: 1998 survey did not ask hours worked in typical week

Not asked in 1997

TEENS' SOCIAL LIFE

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Have a group of friends I hang out with	70%	65%	58%	65%	67%	64%
Only hang out with one or two close friends	27%	29%	41%	28%	28%	31%
Prefer to spend most of my time alone	4%	7%	1%	7%	6%	5%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
(Based on those living with family member)

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Mother is a person they get along with	**68%**	79%	76%	80%	81%	79%
Father is a person they get along with	73%	68%	80%	74%	73%	69%
Mother is a person they confide in about personal problems	**60%**	72%	66%	72%	69%	69%
Father is a person they confide in about personal problems	36%	32%	48%	41%	43%	41%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

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IF YOU COULD PICK ONE PERSON TO BE YOUR ROLE MODEL, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES WOULD YOUR ROLE MODEL BE IN?

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Family member	43%	42%	41%	41%	41%	41%
Friends/family friend	15%	14%	9%	14%	13%	14%
Teaching/education	**22%**	17%	13%	9%	10%	11%
Sports/sports-related	**2%**	0%	2%	9%	9%	10%
Entertainment industry	4%	5%	2%	7%	6%	5%
Religious leader	6%	6%	7%	5%	4%	4%
Business leader	1%	3%	6%	2%	1%	2%
National political leader	0%	5%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Other	**5%**	10%	17%	13%	15%	12%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

GREATEST PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE DURING THE NEXT YEAR

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
PERSONAL GOALS	**79%**	**76%**	**55%**	**41%**	**41%**	**40%**
Adjusting to college	**24%**	**28%**	**19%**	**5%**	**6%**	**6%**
Financial arrangements	**24%**	**20%**	**18%**	**5%**	**7%**	**6%**
Time management	18%	15%	5%	6%	5%	6%
More freedom/independence	**14%**	**3%**	**2%**	**2%**	**1%**	**2%**
Adjusting to new school/ environment	4%	21%	0%	6%	7%	0%
Getting along with peers or family	4%	4%	0%	7%	7%	8%
Other comments on self-improvement	4%	6%	6%	3%	5%	5%
Excel/participate in sports/ athletic activities	**1%**	**1%**	**1%**	**3%**	**3%**	**5%**
Transportation/mobility	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Getting to school	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**2%**	**1%**	**2%**
ACADEMICS	**19%**	**21%**	**39%**	**39%**	**37%**	**43%**
Achieving and maintaining good grades or a good GPA, keeping up in class	12%	14%	27%	27%	26%	25%
Choosing a curriculum	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Selecting a college	2%	1%	0%	3%	3%	5%
Acceptance into college or college of choice	1%	5%	1%	4%	3%	3%
Graduating/completing school year	0%	1%	1%	5%	6%	7%
CAREER	**4%***	**11%**	**14%**	**9%**	**10%**	**10%**
Finding/working at a job	4%	6%	12%	6%	5%	7%
Selecting a career or career goal	0%*	4%	2%	3%	4%	4%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Attend four-year college or university	**92%**	90%	86%	62%	58%	61%
Get a job	**28%**	**26%**	**31%**	**27%**	**29%**	**31%**
Travel	12%	9%	8%	9%	9%	9%
Attend two-year college	9%	6%	11%	12%	16%	14%
Join a volunteer organization	**9%**	11%	12%	3%	2%	3%
Get married	4%	4%	6%	6%	8%	6%
Attend a training or vocation school	**1%**	2%	0%	8%	10%	11%
Join the armed forces	**0%**	4%	0%	7%	8%	8%
Undecided	**1%**	1%	2%	14%	13%	12%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

GREATEST MOTIVATING FACTOR FOR SEEKING FURTHER EDUCATION

(Based on those planning to attend college or training/vocational school)

	National Scholars				Nation's Youth			
	2000	1999	1998	1997	2000	1999	1998	1997
To have the ability to make a difference/change things for the better	**46%**	40%	29%	58%	20%	19%	19%	23%
A mechanism to getting a job/well-paying job	**17%**	12%	**29%**	13%	**38%**	**39%**	**38%**	**34%**
Independence	11%	13%	11%	8%	15%	13%	13%	15%
Self-enrichment	9%	15%	13%	8%	7%	7%	6%	9%
More options becoming available	8%	13%	12%	4%	13%	12%	12%	13%
Following in the footsteps of someone I admire	3%	3%	0%	1%	4%	3%	4%	3%
Family acceptance or pressures	3%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%
A mechanism to getting further education	2%	10%	7%	2%	6%	6%	6%	3%
Social status or acceptance	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	2%	2%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

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TYPE OF COLLEGE WOULD PREFER TO ATTEND

	National Scholars 2000	National Scholars 1999	Nation's Youth 2000	Nation's Youth 1999
Would prefer to attend public college or university	24%	18%	30%	31%
Would prefer to attend private college or university	34%	44%	27%	29%
Have no preference for college or university type (public or private)	43%	38%	42%	40%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

Not asked in 1997

ANTICIPATING WAYS TO FINANCE COLLEGE EDUCATION

	National Scholars 2000	National Scholars 1999	Nation's Youth 2000	Nation's Youth 1999
Total started planning for how will pay	**84%**	90%	64%	66%
Scholarships	**93%**	95%	61%	61%
Grants	**65%**	66%	35%	38%
A job outside of school	**62%**	48%	47%	49%
Student loans	52%	53%	44%	46%
Student sponsored job	**41%**	39%	13%	13%
Parents are paying	**31%**	33%	50%	51%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997 and 1998

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EXPECTED TOTAL COST OF FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE

	National Scholars 2000	National Scholars 1999	Nation's Youth 2000	Nation's Youth 1999
Under $3,000	7%	7%	10%	13%
$3,000–$4,999	6%	1%	9%	10%
$5,000–$6,999	9%	6%	11%	12%
$7,000–$9,999	11%	14%	11%	7%
$10,000–$14,999	29%	23%	23%	22%
$15,000–$19,999	14%	12%	14%	11%
$20,000–$49,999	24%	35%	19%	22%
$50,000 and over	0%	0%	2%	2%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997 and 1998

TOP CAREER CHOICES

	National Scholars 2000	National Scholars 1999	National Scholars 1998	Nation's Youth 2000	Nation's Youth 1999	Nation's Youth 1998
Teaching	17%	11%	9%	7%	6%	8%
Engineering	9%*	8%	11%	5%	5%	6%
Business	9%	6%	14%	6%	7%	6%
Medical Doctor	8%	13%	9%	7%	6%	7%
Communications/Media	6%	5%	4%	2%	3%	3%
Psychology	6%	7%	6%	4%	4%	3%
Law	4%	7%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Computer software development	2%*	3%	1%	7%	5%	4%
Art	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%
Computer hardware developer	1%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Music	1%	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%
Veterinarian	1%	0%	0%	3%	3%	3%
Military Service	0%*	0%	0%	3%	4%	3%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

WHAT SALARY DO YOU EXPECT TO EARN PER YEAR WHEN YOU BEGIN YOUR CAREER?

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Under $15,000	**1%**	4%	4%	7%	8%	7%
$15,000–$24,999	16%	20%	18%	17%	24%	23%
$25,000–$34,999	**39%**	27%	24%	28%	26%	30%
$35,000–$49,999	30%	27%	21%	25%	24%	22%
$50,000–$74,999	11%	16%	18%	14%	11%	11%
$75,000 or more	4%	7%	17%	8%	7%	8%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

	National Scholars				Nation's Youth			
	2000	1999	1998	1997	2000	1999	1998	1997
Ideal age for marriage	25.7	25.7	25.5	25.0	25.5	25.3	25.5	24.8
Number of children would like (based on those who do want children)	**2.6**	2.5	2.4	3.0	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2
Number of children would like (including those who do not want children)	**2.4**	2.4	2.1	na	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.9

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

IMPORTANT TO PERSONAL SUCCESS

(1% Agree/Agree Strongly)

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Work and career	100%	97%	98%	99%	99%	98%
Personal development and satisfaction	100%*	99%	96%	97%	97%	97%
Make a contribution to society	**97%**	94%	98%	77%	76%	76%
Friendships	95%	92%	98%	95%	95%	94%
Immediate family	93%	86%	90%	92%	94%	92%
Religious/spiritual activities	80%	74%	70%	74%	68%	68%
Extended family	80%	76%	82%	80%	79%	75%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

Not asked in 1997

WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF THE AMERICAN DREAM?

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
PERSONAL/FAMILIAL ENRICHMENT	90%	83%	79%	53%	56%	54%
Emotional needs/desires	**77%**	73%	74%	**39%**	**45%**	**43%**
Success/achievement	**38%**	36%	47%	**12%**	**15%**	**14%**
Happiness/enjoyment	**36%**	34%	22%	**13%**	**17%**	**15%**
Family	**25%**	14%	9%	**16%**	**15%**	**13%**
Freedom/choice	**15%**	18%	15%	**9%**	**10%**	**7%**
Spouse/significant others	9%*	2%	4%	5%	5%	4%
Children	8%	9%	2%	5%	7%	5%
Security	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%
Friend/neighbors/community	3%	7%	0%	3%	3%	3%
Love/attention/affection	2%	5%	1%	2%	5%	6%
Be my own person	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%
Healthy, active life/longevity	1%	3%	0%	3%	4%	3%
Marriage	0%*	6%	0%	3%	4%	3%
POSSESSIONS/CAREER	**26%***	**27%**	**15%**	**34%**	**34%**	**29%**
Job/career	22%	19%	12%	24%	24%	21%
Home/apartment	12%	10%	5%	12%	12%	12%
Education	5%	6%	4%	5%	5%	5%
Motor vehicle	1%*	4%	0%	5%	5%	4%
MONETARY GAIN/COMFORT	**25%**	**23%**	**14%**	**30%**	**29%**	**25%**
Have money/comfortable living	20%	13%	11%	18%	14%	16%
Being rich	4%	5%	1%	6%	7%	6%
Have enough money for extras	0%*	5%	1%	4%	5%	3%
UNIVERSAL WELFARE	**22%***	**19%**	**11%**	**15%**	**16%**	**18%**
People reaching out to each other, improving quality of life	**8%**	10%	6%	2%	3%	4%
Equality	4%	4%	0%	3%	2%	2%
Less/no crime/violence/war	4%	4%	0%	3%	3%	5%
Better religious ties	3%	1%	0%	3%	2%	3%
More tolerance/less discrimination	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Happiness, peace, and harmony	1%	3%	1%	4%	6%	5%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*
Not asked in 1997

THE GREATEST NATIONAL PROBLEMS

	National Scholars			Nation's Youth		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Decline of family, moral and social values	**49%**	43%	52%	27%	22%	23%
Crime/violence	**14%**	24%	11%	33%	40%	30%
Poverty/unemployment	7%	6%	18%	6%	5%	5%
Racial tension/discrimination	6%	6%	6%	7%	8%	6%
Drugs	**5%**	7%	7%	18%	16%	17%
AIDS	**4%**	6%	7%	12%	10%	15%
Environmental pollution/ deterioration	4%	6%	6%	8%	6%	7%
Health care	3%	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%
The U.S. budget	3%	0%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Sexual harassment	1%	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%
Domestic terrorism	0%	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%
International terrorism	0%	0%	4%	3%	3%	1%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences from previous year at the 0.5 level. (males vs females)*

** Significantly different at the .10 level*

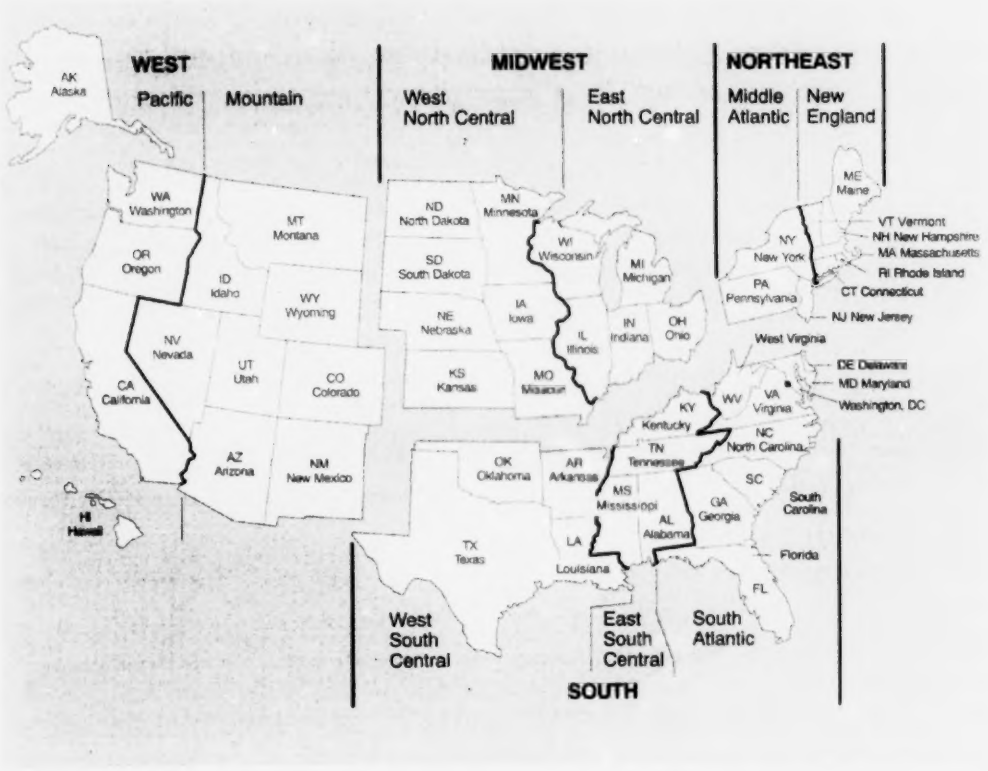
Note: 1997 survey did not include separate breakouts for domestic vs. international terrrorism and other noted responses. Fewer response choices would result in higher percentages for the available responses. Therefore, differences between 1997 and 1998 may not be real changes in opinion.

CHOICE FOR PRESIDENT

	National Scholars	Nation's Youth
George W. Bush	45%	57%
Al Gore	48%	36%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate National Scholars 2000 significantly different from Nation's Youth 2000 at the .05 level.*

MAP OF U.S. CENSUS REGIONS



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Mission
OF THE

To recognize contemporary role models whose experiences exemplify that opportunities for a successful life are available to all individuals who are dedicated to the principles of integrity, hard work, perseverance, and compassion for others.

To provide scholarship assistance to deserving young people who have demonstrated integrity and determination in overcoming adversity in their lives and who have shown the academic potential and personal aspiration to make a unique contribution to society.

To educate America's youth about the limitless possibilities that are available through the American free enterprise system and to underscore the importance of service to others.

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